

ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus is disclosed for simultaneously indicating on each of a plurality of communication terminals, instructions transmitted by each terminal and the identity of the respective terminals that transmitted the instructions. Such a feature can be used to indicate the moves of parties playing a game over a telephone line. Once a communications link is established between two or more parties, their terminals are placed in a game mode which activates inband signal detection and player identification circuitry located within the terminals. Multi-colored indicators (e.g., LEDs) and player identification displays (e.g., LCDs) at each terminal are activated, their color being dependent upon the source of received instructions. In one embodiment, player identification indicators may be incorporated into a touch tone keypad located on the terminals. The keypad's touch tone keys are modified such that each key has two or more color coded indicators incorporated within, each color representing a particular player's move. Thus, besides providing a means for dialing telephone numbers and transmitting instruction signals, the touch tone keys can represent a game board and/or game accessory when the terminal is placed in a game mode. For example, a 3 by 3 matrix formed by the touch tone keys 1 through 9 can be used to play tic-tac-toe over a telephone line. The activation of three LEDs of the same color in a row, column or diagonal will cause those LEDs to blink on each terminal, signifying the end of the game. In an additional embodiment of the invention, indicators can be installed on one or more gaming boards which can be individually extended from the base of the terminal, or inserted into an auxiliary terminal card slot.

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